

Stakes Race Recap



CHURCHILL DOWNS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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SUNNY SKIES WINS WEATHER-DELAYED DEBUTANTE IN THE SLOP; LIMOUSINE LIBERAL COLLECTS THIRD STAKES OF MEET IN KELLY'S LANDING

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, June 30, 2017) – Normandy Farm's homebred **Sunny Skies** gave trainer **Kenny McPeck** and jockey **Robby Albarado** a sweep of Friday's 2-year-old stakes races on closing night at Churchill Downs when she cruised on the front-end in the slop to beat longshot Upset Brewing by 1 ³/₄ lengths in the 117th running of the \$100,000 Debutante Presented by Finlandia Vodka (Listed).

Earlier on the program, McPeck and Albarado teamed to win the 116th running of the \$100,000 Bashford Manor Presented by GE Appliances (Grade III) with **Tommie Lewis**' promising juvenile **Ten City**.

Sunny Skies, the 6-5 favorite, beat 11 other 2-year-old fillies with a front-running triumph in 1:11.83 over sealed "sloppy" racetrack, which :01.38 slower than the colt Ten City's run over a "fast" track. The race was delayed about an hour when a severe thunderstorm hit Louisville at 9:29 p.m. (all times Eastern). The dozen 2-year-old fillies were held in the paddock during the weather delay and remained there as Track Superintendent **Jamie Richardson** and his team sealed and groomed the racing surface after the heavy downpour.

When racing resumed just after 10:30 p.m., Rockin Royalty broke fastest of all from post 2 as Sunny Skies closely pursued from the rail. Sunny Skies put a head in front after the first quarter mile in a swift :21.48 and put away that rival leaving the far turn as an alert Waki Patriot drew even with the eventual winner. After a half mile in :46.09, Sunny Skies kicked away at the head of the stretch and drew clear from Waki Patriot and turned back a challenge from 17-1 outsider Upset Brewing, who rallied wide from far back after being bothered at the start and encountering mild traffic trouble down on the inside the first quarter mile.

The victory was worth \$57,660 which increased the 2-year-old filly's earnings to \$93,660 with a perfect record of two starts. Prior to her Debutante triumph, Sunny Skies broke her maiden at Keeneland on April 27 by a dominating nine lengths.

Sunny Skies paid \$4.60, \$3.40 and \$2.80. Upset Brewing, ridden by **Shaun Bridgmohan**, returned \$10 and \$6.20. Waki Patriot, with **Jon Court** up, was a neck back of the runner-up and paid \$5.20.

Red Dread, Lady O'Toole, Amberspatriot, She's a Julie, Patrona Margarita, Genuwine, Caroline the Great, Chelada and **Rockin Royalty** completed the order of finish. **Therighttobeararms** was scratched.

Sunny Skies is a 2-year-old daughter of 2011 Kentucky Derby winner Animal Kingdom out of the Marquetry mare Skyscape. She was bred in Kentucky by her owner **Nancy K. Polk**, who races under Normandy Farm.

The Debutante, first staged in 1895 and one of Churchill Downs' most storied races, was one of three stakes races on Friday's closing night card at Churchill Downs.

Two races later in the \$70,893 Kelly's Landing, **Katherine Ball**'s homebred **Limousine Liberal**, one of the top sprinters in the country, joined **Finley'sluckycharm** as a three-time stakes winner at the Spring Meet when he rolled to a 2 ³/₄-length score over **The Truth Or Else**. The 5-year-old gelded son of Successful Appeal ran seven furlongs in 1:23.08 under Albarado, who won his third stakes race of the night. Trained by **Ben Colebrook**, Limousine Liberal banked \$42,187 and improved his record to 16-6-5-1—\$847,687. Earlier at the meet, he scored a 13-1 upset in the \$500,000 Churchill Downs (Grade II) on the Kentucky Derby undercard and won the \$100,000 Aristides (GIII) on June 3.

Racing in Kentucky shifts to Ellis Park on Saturday. Action at Churchill Downs will return Sept. 15 for the fifth annual 11-date September Meeting.

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DEBUTANTE QUOTES

ROBBY ALBARADO, jockey of SUNNY SKIES (winner): “With breaking from the inside I knew I had to get her in position early. We got to the lead and I was able to save some energy around the turn. She’s a very nice filly and I think has a bright future ahead of her. I’m so thankful for guys like Kenny (McPeck) that have supported me after I came back from injury and I’m so happy to get it done tonight.”

KENNY McPEEK, trainer of SUNNY SKIES (winner): “A lot of credit goes to our staff at Keeneland. This filly has been a bit of a handful to train. She doesn’t like the stalls that are at Keeneland so we were shipping her back and forth to my training center but would bring her back to the track to breeze. She’s coming around very well. Robby (Albarado) did a great job to get her in position and to nurse her speed around the turn. We’ll probably keep her here this summer and point towards the Pocahontas in the September Meet. I think you’ll see her and Ten City as workmates this summer.”

WILLIAM ‘BUFF’ BRADLEY, trainer of UPSET BREWING (runner-up): “She had a troubled trip down the backside, but I think it didn’t hurt her any. I told Shaun (Bridgmohan) not to rush her that much and I said ‘Let that speed go – we can come catch ‘em.’ I really believe in this filly. She’s got a good head on her shoulders. I think she can run a bit.”

SHAUN BRIDGMOHAN, jockey on UPSET BREWING (runner-up) – “I thought she ran a big race. She ran hard the whole way. At one point I was hoping the leaders would come back, but she gave me a nice run down the lane.”

Q: Her trainer thought she had some trouble early on ... “Down the backside I had to take ahold of her. Some horses come down on her and I had to get out of her spot on the fence. So I got a little further back than I wanted, but she gave a gallant effort and ran well.”

JOHN HANCOCK, trainer of WAKI PATRIOT (third) and AMBERSPATRIOT (sixth): “When they turned for home I was in front and I really thought I had a shot to win it, and I just got outrun from the eighth pole to the wire. But I didn’t invest a lot in the two little fillies I have in here (Waki Patriot and Amberspatriot) and they are what Kentucky racing is really all about. I mean they’re a dream. They’re running against the best on the grounds and these fillies that beat ‘em tonight, you’ll see them later on in the big races. And these fillies are holding their own against them. This little filly that ran third, it’s the second time she’s run this month. She was third in New York and then back here tonight. What can you say? I love Churchill, I love Ellis Park and I love Keeneland, and these two fillies are taking me where I’ve never been before.”

JON COURT, jockey on WAKI PATRIOT (third): “She ran great. She got out of the gate and I just utilized that opportunity to ease over and save some ground. She ran hard to get to the leaders and as we turned for home I thought I might have a big enough punch. But the favorite out-punched me and that’s to be expected. But she ran big.”

KELLY’S LANDING QUOTES

ROBBY ALBARADO, jockey of LIMOUSINE LIBERAL (winner): “He’s such a nice horse. I was so happy I was able to ride him. Ben (Colebrook) has done a great job with him and I wish him the best with the rest of this year’s campaign. We’ve had a great night and it was a great way to close the meet.”

BEN COLEBROOK, trainer of LIMOUSINE LIBERAL (winner): “Our main target was to run in the (July 29) \$350,000 Vanderbilt Handicap (Grade I). We thought we could’ve run in the (July 8) \$350,000 Belmont Sprint Championship (GII) but it would have been a quick turnaround. So, instead of shipping around the country we kept him at home at Churchill. We know he loves the track here and the only worry was the post position. He doesn’t typically like to be inside horses but Robby (Albarado) did a great job to get him outside and rode him perfectly.”

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